

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL TRANSFORMING LIVES



APPLICANT PACK

Prison Officer - Residential

Thank you for your interest in the above role. Below, you will find the job description and person specification, outlining how the different criteria will be assessed throughout the recruitment process. You will also find information on the recruitment and selection process.

Job Description

Job Purpose

The Scottish Prison Service (SPS), established in 1993, is an agency of the Scottish Government whose principal objective is to contribute to making Scotland safer by protecting the public and reducing reoffending. The SPS aims to achieve this by ensuring delivery of secure custody, safe and orderly prisons, high quality standards of care, and opportunities for those in custody to build capacity to help them reintegrate into the community on release.

Prison Officers are a principal agent of delivery of the SPS Vision of Unlocking Potential and Transforming Lives as they are a critical point of contact between those in custody and the organisation charged with their safety, security and personal development. Prison Officers have a positive and caring approach towards those in our care and adopt an asset-based approach, fostering effective relationships in order to help those in SPS care to desist from offending and help transform their lives.

The role depends upon Prison Officers embracing the aims and ethos of the SPS Mission and their personal efficacy and professionalism are vital to developing and maintaining essential working relationships with those in our care. The design and delivery of person-centred services, requires staff who not only demonstrate SPS Values, but who believe in change and their ability to affect it.

Newly appointed Prison Officers - Residential will undertake a block of training as part of a new professional development pathway which represents a significant and positive investment in the professional Prison Officer in Scotland. As such, the role requires a strong on-going commitment to personal and professional development.

Prison Officers - Residential will spend the majority of their time in the residential (accommodation) area of the prison. The role can be physically demanding in that it involves walking and standing for a majority of the time and there will be frequent occasions where physical fitness and dexterity will be required to assist in the secure handling of challenging situations. The potentially intense nature of the interactions with those in our care and their families may exert emotional demands on Prison Officers.

Belief | Respect | Integrity | Openness | Courage | Humility | Innovation

Key Responsibilities	
1	Encouraging positive behaviours in individuals in engaging with rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives and processes through a supportive, caring and inclusive approach, consistently demonstrating support and respect for equality, diversity and human rights.
2	Contributing to the prevention and constructive management of challenging and/or difficult behaviours whilst demonstrating fairness and consistency in order to build positive relationships with individuals in custody.
3	Managing individuals' case work and exercising professional judgement in responding to particular needs and challenges, identifying changes in individuals' physical and mental health and initiating appropriate responses by others.
4	Completion of all administration and communications relevant to the role, in line with local and national requirements and standards. This includes processing, analysing, evaluating and disseminating appropriate and relevant information, as well as production of high quality and accurate report writing and maintenance of paper and electronic records in accordance with SPS policies and relevant legislation.
5	Contributing to effective operational risk management by ensuring the safe and secure supervision of those in SPS care ensuring their needs and entitlements are consistently met in line with Prison Rules and Directives, SPS policy, Standard Operating Procedures, and relevant legislation.
6	Managing conflict, with a focus on de-escalation, and contributing towards local incident management using established and approved techniques whilst recognising and managing the impact of challenging behaviours on self and others.

Person Specification & Assessment Information

Our selection approach is based upon the principle of merit which means that we will look to appointment the person or people who best meet the requirements of the role as outlined in the person specification. In determining the most meritorious candidate, applicants will be assessed against the published criteria during the selection process, as detailed below. The most meritorious candidate(s) will be the one(s) who best meets the essential criteria for the role.

Criteria	Essential/ Desirable?	When assessed?
Core		
<p>Values</p> <p>Personal values which are aligned to and consistent with SPS Values.</p> <p>Belief - believe that people can change</p> <p>Respect - have proper regard for individuals, their needs and their human rights</p> <p>Integrity - apply high ethical, moral and professional standards</p> <p>Openness - work with others to achieve the best outcomes</p> <p>Courage - have the courage to care regardless of circumstances</p> <p>Humility - recognise that we can learn from others</p>	Essential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situational Judgement Test • Group Exercise • Interview
<p>Cognitive Ability</p> <p>An ability to comprehend written passages, perform basic mathematical functions, draw logical conclusions, and identify patterns.</p>	Essential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive Ability Test
Qualifications		
<p>Commitment to Professional Development</p> <p>Commitment to continuous professional development, including undertaking formal training and qualifications to support your own learning and development as well as the development of those in our care.</p>	Essential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Exercise • Interview

Belief | Respect | Integrity | Openness | Courage | Humility | Innovation

Experience		
<p>Supporting Others</p> <p>Experience of providing support, advice or guidance to others.</p>	Essential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview
<p>Making a Difference</p> <p>Experience of making a positive difference to the lives of others.</p>	Essential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview
<p>Resilience</p> <p>Experience of managing challenging circumstances or behaviours, using your emotional intelligence to prevent or resolve conflict, regulate your own emotional reactions and positively influencing others to achieve desired results.</p>	Essential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview
Knowledge & Skills		
<p>Building & Maintaining Relationships</p> <p>Ability to foster good relationships and work effectively and collaboratively with a diverse range of people, sharing knowledge and skills, and influencing others to achieve desired outcomes.</p>	Essential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Exercise
<p>Problem Solving & Decision Making</p> <p>Ability to proactively identify issues, recognise themes and patterns in order to implement solutions and make decisions which are defensible, evidence-based, take account of risks, appropriate and timely.</p>	Essential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Exercise
<p>Communication Skills</p> <p>Ability to manage situations, relationships and conflict through effective use of communication skills.</p>	Essential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Exercise
<p>Managing Information</p> <p>Ability to use a computer and other digital devices to process, analyse, evaluate and disseminate information and produce high quality written reports and maintain effective and accurate records.</p>	Essential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Exercise

Recruitment & Selection Process

The recruitment process has been designed to provide us with greater insight into the values as well as the skills and capability of candidates.

Why are values so important to us?

Juliet Hancock, an organisational development professional, describes the value of values and why they are important in the world of work.

Our personal values describe what is most important to us; they are individual and internal and we use them every day, often at an unconscious level, to make decisions and choices about what we do and how we do it – they are the reason **why** we do the things that we do.

Our values provide the motivation, drive and energy to get things done; they also determine when we feel frustrated, angry or lack the energy to do something because it doesn't fit the values that are important to us.

If there is alignment between our personal values and the prevailing environment at work, we will feel a sense of wellbeing. If there is a gap, we will 'disengage' and not be able to give our best or fulfil our potential.

It is for these reasons that values are so important to us as we recognise that a strong alignment between personal values and [organisational values](#) will support us in achieving our vision of unlocking potential and transforming the lives of those in our care.

Further details about the different selection methods used within the process can be found below.

Application Submission

On submission of your application, we will review the content and ensure you meet the SPS minimum criteria in relation to nationality, criminal convictions and previous disciplinary action whilst in employment.

Situational Judgement Test

If you meet the minimum eligibility criteria, you will be invited to undertake an online situational judgement test (SJT). This is designed to measure your values, behaviours and attributes against those identified as important within the role. There is no timelimit within the test and it should take between 25-30 minutes to complete, however you should note that you will only have 5 days from the invite being sent to you to complete the assessment. Following completion we will review your results and confirm whether your application will be progressed to the next stage of the process.

Cognitive Ability Test

If successful at the SJT, you will then be invited to undertake an online cognitive ability test. The test, lasting 12 minutes in total, will assess your general cognitive ability across three areas: verbal, numerical, and logical reasoning designed to assess your ability to understand and comprehend written and numerical information as well as your ability to draw logical

Belief | Respect | Integrity | Openness | Courage | Humility | Innovation

conclusions. This will help us to determine your ability to engage in the training and learning required as well as to perform successfully within the role.

As the cognitive ability test is completed in unsupervised conditions (i.e. in your own time), you should be aware that if invited to the final (interview) stage of the process, you may be invited to complete a second online assessment in under supervised conditions (i.e. onsite at SPS). This step is taken as a precaution to ensure that all candidates are evaluated fairly and equally on their actual capabilities and competencies.

Group Exercise & Written Exercise

If successful at the cognitive ability test, you will be invited to attend an assessment centre consisting of a group exercise and written exercise. You will be allocated a group on the day and will be provided with a brief by a facilitator. The group exercise will be recorded to support the evaluation process, as such you will be asked to complete a media disclaimer on the day. The group exercise is designed to test your ability to communicate with and build effective relationships with others, as well as your ability to pro-actively approach and resolve problems and make decisions.

You will then participate in a short written exercise using a PC.

The exercises will be evaluated by a panel of assessors to determine whether you will progress to the interview stage.

Interview

If successful at the group exercise and written exercise, you will be invited to attend the final stage of the selection process which consists of an interview. The interview will be competency based and there will be a panel of assessors present on the day. Further information about interviews, including useful tips, can be found in the “Guidance for Applicants” document.

As previously mentioned, it is at this stage that you may be invited to complete a further cognitive ability test to verify the results from your earlier test.

Pre-employment Checks

The final stage before appointment is the pre-employment checks. The checks consist of the following elements:

- [Fitness Test](#) – to assess level of fitness to operate safely and effectively in the role
- References – to check employment history (and character) over the preceding three years to ensure suitability for employment
- Disclosure Scotland - to ensure suitability for employment in accordance with SPS criminal convictions guidance
- Health Declaration & Medical Examination (you may also be subject to a substance misuse test) – to ensure mental and physical fitness to undertake the full requirements of the role

Belief | Respect | Integrity | Openness | Courage | Humility | Innovation

Intakes

Our next intake for Prison Officers – Residential, will be Summer 2024 with further intakes at various points throughout the year.

Newly appointed Prison Officers - Residential will commence on a professional development pathway and will have access to the future qualification route which follows. This pathway is modular and credit-rated, ensuring the learning that new Prison Officers undertake is comparable to other professions and recognised on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). The training will give Officers an opportunity to develop a wider understanding of the policy and strategy within the criminal justice system, offending behaviour and the evidence-based interventions that can address it, and an appreciation of how both inform daily engagement with those in our care. The first module of the pathway, and any that follow it, will be a combination of classroom learning and work-based practice.

Additional Information & Contact Details

If you have any queries regarding the vacancy or have a disability which you feel may affect your performance at any stage in the recruitment and selection process, please contact the **Resourcing Team** by email at: vacancies.prisons.gov.scot or by telephone on: **01324 710410** to allow reasonable adjustments to be made to assist you.



Belief | Respect | Integrity | Openness | Courage | Humility | Innovation